

PETER SUDDABY... BLACKPOOL'S Mr. CONFIDENT

PETER SUDDABY intended to teach when he left Oxford, but now he has another aim. "I want to help Blackpool into the First Division next season," he says.

"We're more professional at Blackpool now. We don't give much away, whereas we used to be a bit charitable at times.

"We picked up well towards the end of last season and started playing really well from Christmas onwards. In fact, if we had shown better form earlier on we could have been up with the League leaders at the run-in, instead of being a few crucial points behind. But we feel it will be our turn next season."

Concentrate

Suddaby joined Blackpool after playing amateur football with Wycombe, where his form attracted offers from several clubs. "I had approaches from Reading, Oxford, Watford and Blackpool but chose the Seasiders as they were in the First Division then," he says.

"Certainly the year we were

relegated wasn't too good, but I have never really regretted joining Blackpool — especially now, for with a great bunch of lads together, we feel very confident about our chances in the new season.

"I had planned to take up teaching as soon as I left Oxford, but things went so well in amateur football and after the offers started coming along, I decided to forget the teaching for a bit.

Benefit

"Nowadays, I like to forget my degree and just concentrate purely on football. I don't think, 'Well, if I don't play well, I can go back and teach'. I don't look at it like that. I feel you play better if you think the exact opposite—'I'm a footballer and I've got nothing to fall back on'.

"You go out there and play like a professional if you do that. But if you don't, you

tend to play like an amateur.

"Although I've got the training I don't feel I'm cheating because I didn't go into teaching. I don't feel I wasted my time, for you don't only benefit educationally from a University education — it's an important time from 18 to 21.

"I don't think any education is ever wasted, although I must admit I sometimes wish I had gone straight into football and had all those years experience in the game. I feel sure that would have helped a tremendous amount."

Looking ahead Suddaby plans to take up full-time teaching in the next few years. But he may well let Blackpool's progress determine his immediate future.

And if that is the case Suddaby could face a long wait before his teaching career begins. For like others at Bloomfield Road, he believes the present side could go far.



SUDDABY... in full stride